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los angeles valley college's
VALLEY STAR
the independent student newspaper

CLASSICAL MUSIC COMES TO LIFE

SEE PAGE 3

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FINANCIAL WORKSHOP ASSISTS STUDENTS

Valley College benefited from a financial aid workshop last Wednesday.

CLAIRE BRISLEY
STAFF WRITER

Valley College's Transfer Alliance Program held a Student Aid 101 workshop this past Tuesday in the Student Services Annex, focusing on the best way to finance student education.

"I think it is important to bring awareness to students about the pitfalls of student loans to pay for college," said Transfer Alliance Program and honors counselor, Dr. Michael Gold, "[as well as] the many avenues for scholarships, grants, work study and more that are available to help make higher education affordable and attainable."

Representatives from Student Debt Crisis and Young Invincibles dedicated time and complimentary pizza to help educate students about the best route to take when going to school. Each student shared his or her major and where he or she plans to transfer, giving representatives a grasp on how to help each individual.

Using a Power Point presentation, representatives Natalia Abrahams of Student Debt Crisis and Tamika Butler of Young Invincibles, introduced FASFA, scholarship opportunities, grants and different types of loans to help pay for college.

At a $25,000 average amount of debt that students graduate with, students relayed that it was helpful for everyone to have information on how to pay for college and how to pay loans back after graduating.

"These statistics are not meant to scare you; they are meant to help you on staying informed," said Abrahams. "You will have an easier time getting into the workforce with a degree."

The differences between public and private schools were introduced, and the costs and the amount students can potentially get through financial aid were broken down. To receive aid, the first step advised is to apply for FASFA. This can result in scholarships and grants, which do not have to be paid back.

Students can receive up to $12,192 through the Cal Grant and even be offered certain funds for students transferring from California Community Colleges.

"There are scholarships out there for anything," said Butler. "You just have to look for them."

Another way to pay for college is through the Federal Work Study in which the school offers the ability for a student to work for the campus in exchange for the school funding the student's education.

Information was given about public (federal) loans and private loans used to pay for school. public loans will be subsidized or unsubsidized with a fixed, lower interest rate where as private loans will be through the bank and will have a variable interest rate. The representatives advised students to go with federal loans, which will have the lowest interest rate.

"I learned a lot I didn't know about paying for education," said psychology major Barbara Bali. "I will be much smarter with taking out loans now."

For more information, visit studentdebtcrisis.org or younginvincibles.org.

LAVC MUSEUM OPENS

JOHN STRUBE | VALLEY STAR

BIRD'S EYE VIEW - Former Valley College instructor, and aviation enthusiast, Richard Raskoff explaining one of his aerial photos to his gallery attendees.

VALLEY COLLEGE BEGINS $630 MILLION PROJECT

Valley will undergo a new construction project to renovate existing buildings.

HANNAH POWERS
STAFF WRITER

Before the new Student Services Center, the newest building on the Valley College campus was opened in 1968. Due to no funds being available from the state and competing for attention with 112 other community colleges in California, Valley went through a period of more than 30 years with no developments.

"We always had a master plan but after Measure J passed in 2008, that doubled our budget, so we got to revise it and now we're now able to do so much more," said Valley President Sue Carleo. "This will be our most intense period of construction since 1950 when all the original buildings were built."

Valley is now undergoing a $630 million project to build and renovate existing buildings.

When students return for the fall semester, there will be three to four buildings under construction. Green fencing will cordon off these areas and new bright orange signs will be placed to help guide students around the campus.

When students are asked about the construction and the new buildings, most are unaware of the future of Valley.

Business major Robert Castillo said, "I didn't know they were making those new buildings. I can't wait to use the Monarch Center; hopefully, it'll be done before I transfer."

The Monarch Center is one of the seven new projects to be constructed. This building will contain a café, the new bookstore and the new cafeteria. There will be a quad in front for student events, and the cafeteria will be covered with a canopy. With the closure of the current cafeteria at the end of this semester, Valley will have food trucks as a replacement in two locations on campus.

"We are aware that student parking is a problem and big issue on campus," said Carleo. "So, we are going to have a new multi-floor parking structure with 1,200 parking spaces. It will provide convenient parking for students, and according to the plan should be completed in 15 months."

The new parking structure will replace the current softball field, and players will be practicing off campus until the new field is built, which will be located near the tennis courts.

The entire plan for Valley's future is available online, with more information on the new Media Performance Arts Center, Workforce/Development building and the other projects.

"In three years, everything will be done," said Carleo. "Valley College will be awesome ."

STUDENTS MAY FACE NEW 90-UNIT RULE

Gov. Jerry Brown is proposing a budgetary plan to enforce a 90-unit cap.

JENNA BUMGARDNER
ONLINE EDITOR

In January, Gov. Jerry Brown turned his focus to community colleges, proposing a budgetary plan that would enforce performance-based funding, limit the state subsidization of tuition at 90 units and prioritize enrollment for full-time students.

Brown's plan is meant to keep community colleges accessible and affordable to all students and to provide an incentive to transfer or obtain an associate's degree in a system where only a third of students actually do so.

"Gov. Brown seeks to make changes to the state's higher education system so that he can show the public that their tax dollars are generating graduates in an efficient manner," said Valley College President Sue Carleo. "The most obvious way to do this is to push students through the system at a faster pace by limiting the availability for students to take more time and delay their completion."

If approved by the state legislature, some of these changes would be enacted gradually over several years, but some, like the 90-unit cap, would be implemented as soon as fall 2013.

Currently, students pay $46 per unit, but if Brown's proposals passes, students who have completed 90 units or more would have to pay full price: $190 per unit. Some students are concerned about this unit cap and think that it penalizes those with double majors or those going back to school to learn a new trade.

"The difficulty with this approach is that most community college students ... have many competing issues to balance in their lives," said Carleo. "Those who have completed a degree but now must change careers also are not considered in the governor's new model. For the changes that he has proposed to reform the state's higher [education] system it will be essential that legitimate exceptions can be made to address what we are really about: preparing and graduating an educated citizenry."

Brown's plan is meant to expand on changes proposed by last year's statewide task force charged with improving California's community colleges, which pushed for students with 100 units or fewer to get priority registration. But some aspects of Brown's plan were reviewed and rejected namely because of the performance-based funding.

Performance-based funding would change the way community colleges are currently being funded. Instead of receiving money from the state at the start of the semester, payment would be delayed and would only pay for students who complete their courses. However, this might lead some colleges to cut classes that are more difficult for students to complete their degree.

Regardless of the plan's controversy, some college officials are glad that Brown has focused on community colleges and started a dialogue about how the community college system can improve.

"It's wonderful to have an environment where we're going to have some provocative conversations about policy," Community Colleges Chancellor Brice Harris told the Los Angeles Times. "We're not going to shy away, and [we] actually look forward to the discussion."

For more information on Brown's proposal, visit http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/PolicyInAction/KeyFacts.aspx.

COMMUNITY BRACES FOR COLDWATER CLOSURE

Coldwater Canyon Avenue will be closed for construction between Ventura Boulevard and Mulholland Drive through next month.

RACHEL PARSONS
STAFF WRITER

Coldwater Canyon Avenue will be closed between Ventura Boulevard and Mulholland Drive for one month beginning in late March, according to the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

The section of road will be inaccessible Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 7 p.m. and Saturday from 8:30 a.m. until 6 p.m. starting March 23 through April 25. There will be local access for residents and businesses.

"There's no candy coating this," said Councilmember Paul Krekorian in a news conference. "During the course of this project, this is going to a major inconvenience."

The closure will affect traffic patterns throughout the southern San Fernando Valley.

Saturday, preliminary work began in preparation for the closing. Until March 22, there is no left turn onto Ventura Boulevard from Coldwater coming from either direction. After the full closure begins March 23, during construction hours only, left turns will be allowed from southbound Coldwater onto Ventura as directed by Los Angeles Department of Transportation traffic officers.

According to Greg Bartz, an LADWP community relations liaison, the department made the decision to close the street during the day after coordinating with neighborhood councils, the LADOT and Krekorian's office.

"The considerable noise generated by the needed work would be unacceptable to the residents in a nighttime setting," Bartz wrote in a letter to the affected neighborhood.

The shutdown will allow crews to complete a major portion of construction on the replacement of a section of water pipe called the City Trunk Line. Valley College is served directly from distribution lines that branch off of the aging artery.

The existing 60-inch water line is 99 years old. A portion of it ruptured in 2011, flooding Studio City.

Work along this stretch of the major thoroughfare has been underway for a year-and-a-half, and the entire project is scheduled for completion in 2015.

While some homeowners in adjacent canyons are worried about the increase in traffic on their streets, local business owner Danny Marsh is concerned about the decrease in revenue from loss of traffic. Marsh and others like him along Ventura expect to lose the attention of an estimated 25,000 drivers per day while the road is closed.

EDITOR'S NOTE:
The views expressed on this page are solely those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Valley Star, its instructors, editors, staff or those of Los Angeles Valley College, its administrators, faculty, staff or students.

QUICK, CHEAP ENERGY AIDS TAKE A TOLL ON HEALTH

The health risks of increasingly popular artificial energy drinks makes one wonder whether the sugary confections are rockstars or monsters.

HANNAH POWERS
STAFF WRITER

Whether it is cramming for that final, trying to not fall asleep in class or just wanting to party, students everywhere are continuing to grab energy drinks off the shelves even with their bad reputation. Whether it is drinking one or blindly finishing more than three in one session, it is safe to say they are not healthy for the body or mind.

The sound of that crack when opening a can and guzzling its contents with the promise of immediate energy seems so alluring. With more than 160 milligrams of caffeine in a Monster Energy drink and 206 milligrams in a 5-Hour Energy shot, the pitiful caffeine levels of 80 milligrams in a small coffee seem even less appealing to a college student who needs that extra boost.

It does not help that these drinks are accessible almost everywhere from grocery stores to vending machines to gas stations.

The Valley College cafeteria stocks various kinds of the Rockstar brand, costing only $3. Red Bull and Monster can be found in all the drink vending machines. With juice and water ranging from $2 to $2.50, it is easy to see how these cheap drinks are so popular.

However, with such extortionate levels of caffeine and sugar, the boost one receives is short lived. That energy soon departs the body, leaving that "crash and burn" feeling. The caffeine and sugar give a jolt, but as soon as it wears off, the body will more than likely feel worse than before that first sip.

The increasing amount of warnings in the news over energy drinks has been extremely worrying. In 2011, Anais Fournier, a 14-year-old Maryland girl, died of a heart attack from alleged caffeine toxicity after drinking two cans of Monster Energy drinks. Even after two years, the FDA is still investigating her death and 13 unfortunate others.

Rockstar, Red Bull, Monster and 5-Hour are currently the most popular energy drinks on the market. According to an article in Forbes magazine, energy drink sales rose by more than 16 percent last year.

Red Bull, which has dominated the market since the beginning of the energy drinks craze, was surpassed by Monster, which claimed 35 percent of the market, leaving Rockstar with 19 percent.

With their flashy packaging and appealing advertisements, the owners of these companies know their market very well, as evidenced by one genius Red Bull slogan: "Nobody ever wishes they'd slept more during college."

Clearly, these drinks are not the best. But when drank in moderation—not three a day—there is nothing wrong with turning to them for a boost in an attempt to get that A. But just remember: energy drinks are not miracle workers.

PUBLISHERS REWRITE THE HISTORY BOOKS

Do not be duped by primary education; it often skews the facts.

RACHEL PARSONS
STAFF WRITER

When asked, most students who were even half awake in third grade will tell you that Betsy Ross designed and made the first American flag. The rest will say, "Betty somebody?" The story goes that a congressional committee barged into her shop one day where she did indeed make flags and the rest is history.

The problem is she did not design or make that famous flag, and there was no such congressional committee. A man by the name of Francis Hopkinson, a representative of New Jersey and a signer of the Declaration of Independence, is credited with the design though he was never paid for it.

The truth is out there. It is just buried, glossed over or polished. The good news is higher education gives people a real shot at finding the truth for themselves, and not only about flags. The ability to discover knowledge for oneself is the most valuable of all skills learned at the college level.

The majority of Americans know Thomas Jefferson was the principal author of the Declaration of Independence. What many do not know is that in the first draft, he included a paragraph denouncing slavery, which was later removed.

History textbooks are full of revisions skewed to make the country of distribution—or its benefactors—look like a winner or a hero. At the very least, some of this careful tinkering with the tale of time aims to simply not let the sovereign state look quite like the loser or villain it may have been. The United States is no different.

Students in middle school might profess that the first woman in space was U.S. astronaut Sally Ride. While it instills some pretty patriotic feelings to think that America holds the honor, Ride was not the first woman by a long shot. Soviet cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova was zooming around the planet in the Russian space program while Ride was still a small child.

So maybe the educational system doesn't outright lie—it just likes to occlude. Propaganda has existed since people realized that they could sway one another with highly selective information. Which means the dawn of time. Maybe even before that. Every citizen of every country has been subjected to some form of propagandizing in their history books since they were in grade school.

As an adult, responsibility rests with the student to find out what really happened. Some publishers of textbooks skew facts and figures to perpetuate agendas. The beautiful part of higher education is that more accurate information is available the higher it goes.

There are relatively new resources like LexisNexis, an enormous online legal and news database free to access at school libraries, which otherwise comes with a hefty price tag.

Then, of course, there is the old-school resource: a history professor. Those guys actually like to talk about the past, absurd as it sounds. The whole point of college-level education is that the tools to uncover the facts exist to be taken advantage of. So go take.

VALLEY VIEW | HOW ACCURATELY DO YOU THINK OUR TEXTBOOKS PORTRAY HISTORY?

"Who knows ... because they were never really there."
-JOSHUA ROMERO, FILM

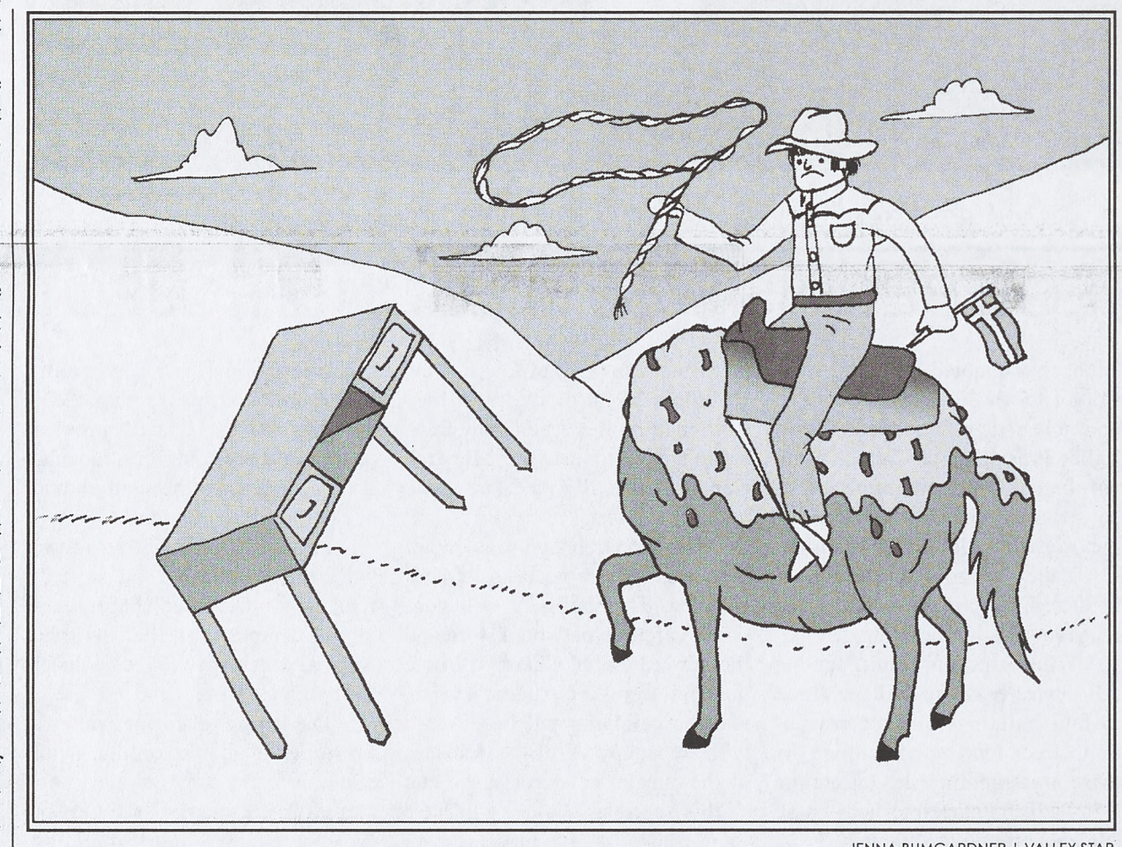
"It's not at all accurate. History is written by the victors, and they can twist it and turn it however way they want."
-JUSTIN JOHNSON, MUSIC

"We can gain a lot of information from [them] but any time you have somebody writing a book it's gonna become subjective."
-SOOZY RIOS BELLENOT, UNDECIDED

"The history books that we have aren't accurate because the real history will scare the living [hell] out of us."
-VICTOR DUARTE, ART

"I don't think they're accurate at all. It's all bad stuff. I think they should talk about the really good stuff and why it happens."
-OMAR DESANTIAGO, UNDECIDED

COMPILED BY JAHSAUDI PERKINS | VALLEY STAR



JENNA BUMGARDNER | VALLEY STAR

SNEAKY FOOD: IKEA THE LATEST TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF CONSUMER IGNORANCE

As companies play fast and loose with what they put into the food they sell, consumers must take more personal responsibility.

SANDRA SAY
STAFF WRITER

When looking for a new desk for the bedroom, a table for the kitchen or a couch for the living room, a trip to IKEA is inevitable for many. After finding the perfect piece of furniture, a pit stop at the in-store restaurant for some of their famed Swedish meatballs is the final detour for most before heading home to assemble their new piece of furniture's 2,500 pieces.

As the phrase goes, appearances can be deceiving, and what claims to be a simple Swedish meal might contain an unexpected surprise.

Recent reports from the Czech Republic have revealed that IKEA's popular Swedish meatballs, which were sold in 13 European countries, were found to contain horsemeat. A spokesperson for the company said that all batches of the frozen meatballs have been removed from the shelves of countries such as Ireland, Netherland, the United Kingdom and Portugal.

Food production companies' main priorities should be to protect consumers and inform their customers what they are putting on their plates, not trying to pull a bait and switch like something out of a 1970s' sci-fi film.

Consumers have a right to know what they are paying for and especially what they are eating. Labeling food products has been an ongoing debate, having increasingly gained traction in California in November's elections when one of the most hotly contested propositions was 37, which would have required genetically modified foods to be labeled as such. Despite the proposition losing at the polls, the issue has continued to be a hot-button topic. And it is looking as though more transparency in labeling might be the only solution for consumers to know exactly what they are eating.

The furniture company has released a statement to reassure customers that the American IKEA restaurants "contain only beef and pork from animals raised in the U.S. and Canada," and horsemeat has not been detected in U.S. chains; however, the country is vulnerable as a future victim due to the country's consumption of meat products.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, 25.6 billion pounds of beef was consumed in 2011. Horsemeat consumption has been legal in the United States for two years; therefore, without any knowledge, people could be eating horse and not even realize it.

With events like this occurring—and not at the hands of an obscure chain but a multi-continent conglomerate like IKEA—it is clear that companies cannot be trusted to be honest with their customers, so responsibility lies with the consumer to know what they are buying and eating. Buyer beware.

LOS ANGELES IS NOT ON THE LIST

Los Angeles does not have the fashion credibility to compete with other major cities in the fashion world and has a long way to come before it does.

JHANELLE RIVERA
STAFF WRITER

During Fashion Week, runways are built in the "big four" style capitals: New York, London, Milan and Paris. The industry relies on these top cities to gain knowledge on the latest trends. Los Angeles has made numerous—failed—attempts to become a fashion capital contender and should remain excluded based upon its deficiencies in fashion credibility.

Fashion Week, a biannual event, gives the media and department store buyers an opportunity to preview the new offerings from high fashion's infamous labels, such as Chanel, Oscar de la Renta and Alexander McQueen—artwork relative to the season. With the fashion calendar six months ahead, menswear for autumn and winter debuts during January, while women's wear extends February through March. For spring and summer, women's clothing is displayed September through October, while men's exhibits end in June.

The unusual schedule allows the department stores an early start to purchase "what's in" pieces for consumers. Likewise, magazines, newspapers and bloggers receive a chance to write and capture the latest in fashionable textiles, colors and models they would like to publish in their editorials. The Fashion Week calendars for the "big four" are flooded with shows and events, but as for Los Angeles, fashionistas find themselves dissatisfied during this avant-garde occasion.

While skimming though Los Angeles' Fashion Week calendar, events are limited. Looking at its two-day event at Siren Studios reveals a list of unfamiliar designers. While it may be disappointing that the city does not nab big-name designers, it is important to discover underground fashion artists, such as Jen Award, Nikki Rich and Scott x Scott, in Los Angeles. This helps support those new to the fashion community through viewing those artists who design not only for commerce but for the sheer passion of designing, sewing and stitching.

According to Ariana Gomez, the public information coordinator for Los Angeles' fashion and business improvement district, Los Angeles is already a fashion capital. She mentions Los Angeles is the go-to place on the West Coast where buyers from department stores, boutiques and online shops make purchases for fast fashion, such as Forever 21, H&M and Love Culture, for an affordable price.

"What Los Angeles does is different from what goes on in New York, London, Milan and Paris. Los Angeles fashion is taking the latest trend and mass producing it for the general audience," said Gomez.

Los Angeles may have a huge fashion economy, yet the city known for Hollywood dwells on the "big four" to receive information to produce an array of fashionable clothing aimed towards shoppers. Until that changes, Los Angeles will not be ready to compete in fashion's Major League.

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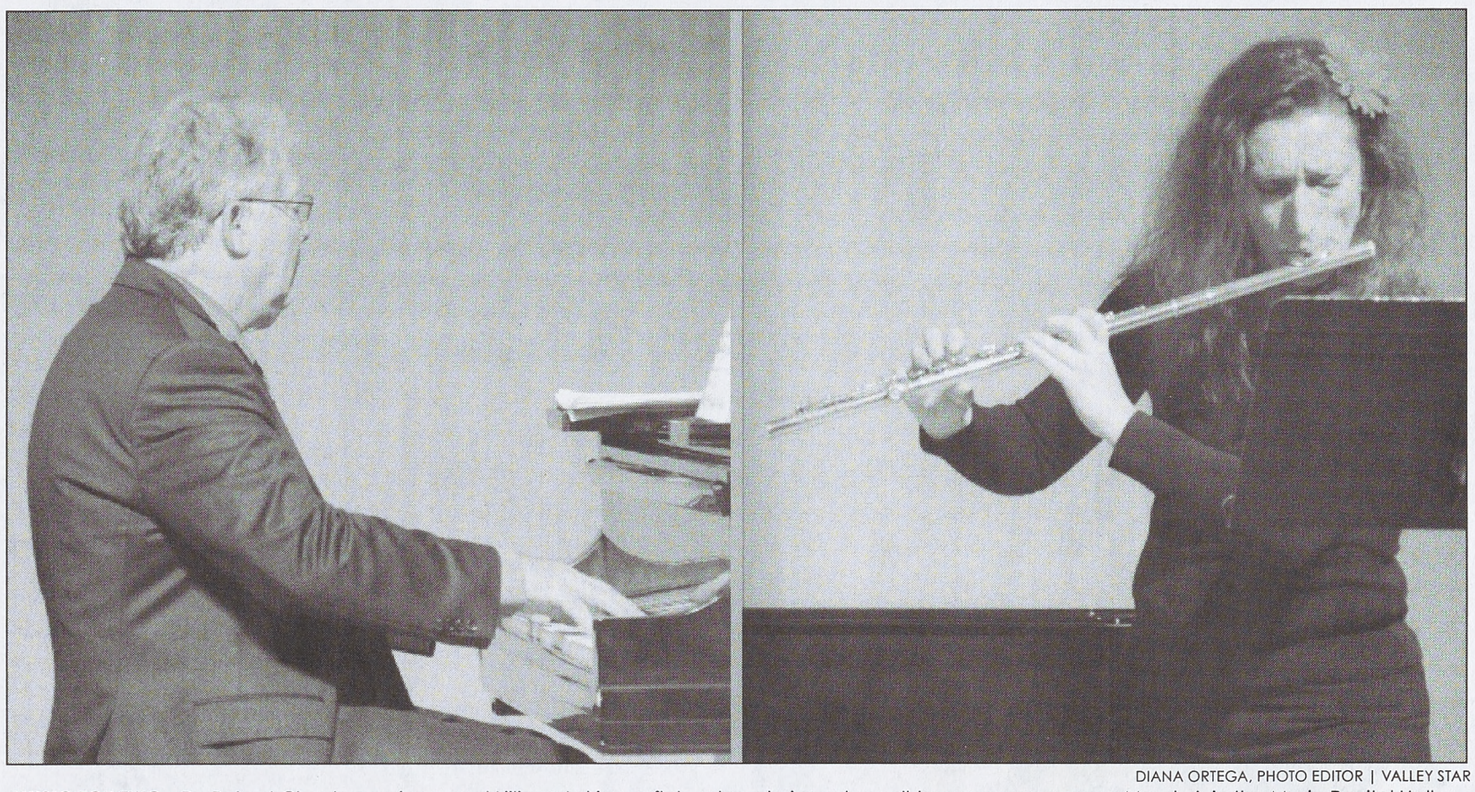

DIANA ORTEGA, PHOTO EDITOR | VALLEY STAR

MUSIC FOR TWO - Dr. Robert Chauls, on piano, and Ljiljana Lukic, on flute, played pieces by well-known composers on March 6. in the Music Recital Hall. room 106.

VALLEY'S OWN MAESTRO PERFORMS IN FREE WEDNESDAY CONCERT SERIES

Classical music takes the stage in the third installment of weekly concerts at Valley.

RACHEL PARSONS
STAFF WRITER

The air was still and warm as familiar strains of Beethoven, Chopin and Poulenc floated from the stage, filling the acoustically brilliant auditorium. No amplification needed.

The music department's own Dr. Robert Chauls, pianist, and guest flutist Ljiljana Lukic played for a full house in the 140-seat Music Recital Hall Wednesday during the third performance in the music program's free Spring Concert Series.

"People get intimidated by classical music," said Christian Nova, coordinator of the series and voice instructor at Valley College. "They think they're supposed to be listening for something, that there's something they need to understand about it."

What Chauls and Lukic seem to understand about it is they are both masters so precise in technique that they can let go onstage and simply interpret emotional expression.

Particularly Lukic, an accomplished musician who immigrated to the United States from the former Yugoslavia after war broke out in the early '90s. Her face is mobile and animated as she plays, eyebrows working away, framed by a mop of bright red hair with an even brighter red daisy tucked above one ear. She is as enjoyable to watch as to hear.

She transitioned easily from Francis Poulenc's "Sonata for Flute and Piano," a traditional challenge to Claude Bolling's last movement of "Veloce," a 20th-century jazz piece.

"[Veloce] would be my favorite," Lukic said of all the music on the program. "I'm just exploring it still. [Bolling] played around with different themes so the classical flutist doesn't feel trapped by playing jazz."

Of the five pieces played, Chauls performed two solos: the ubiquitous "Sonata Pathetique" by Beethoven and a selection of three waltzes from Chopin. The devilishly fast "Minute Waltz" gave a good sneak peek at his dexterity, which would—as with Lukic—lend itself well to "Veloce," a little ditty that is hardly slow. He has instructed at Valley since 1973.

Nova arranges an eclectic variation of styles for the string of weekly Wednesday afternoon shows. It may be one of the few concert recital settings in which the audience gets a Q-and-A session afterward. It is worth staying for the knowledge drop.

"The keyboard keeps expanding," said Chauls, referring to the wider range of notes available that makes playing work like Chopin's possible. "In Mozart's time, the piano was five octaves. Today it's seven-and-a-half … you just couldn't play [music like] Chopin's in Mozart's time."

The fun facts in the Q-and-A are part of the reason the series is actually a class that Nova requires students to attend. He seems to enjoy exposing his young musicians to classical because so many are unfamiliar with it. He goes back to the intimidation factor, stressing not to over-think it.

"At the end of the day," he said. "All you need to know is how it makes you feel. You just enjoy it."

For the schedule of free weekly concerts visit:www.lavc.edu/music/lavc-music-calendar.htm

THE VALLEY STAR INFO & STAFF

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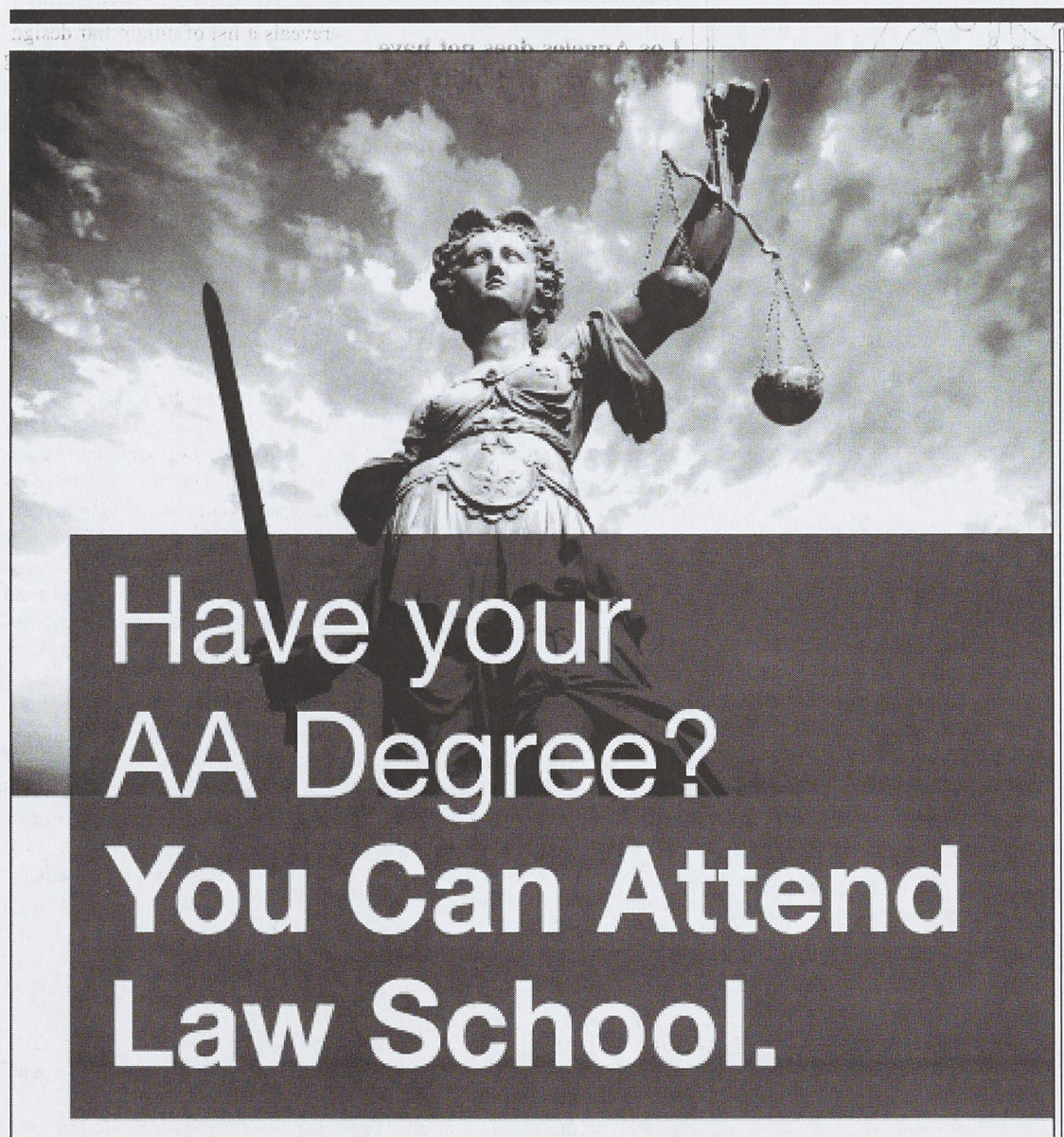
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JOHN STRUBE | VALLEY STAR

TAKING FIGHT - Photographer Richard Raskoff speaks to attendees about his love of flight and photography.

LAVC HISTORICAL MUSEUM PRESENTS "MOJAVE: AN EXHIBIT OF IMAGES BY RICHARD RASKOFF"

The LAVC Historical Museum features the work of a former student and instructor.

JOSH ESQUIVEL
STAFF WRITER

Aerial photographer Richard Raskoff's sky-high accounts of the Mojave Desert captivated attendees of his exhibit at the newly opened LAVC Historical Museum on Feb. 26.

"Everything [inspires me]—I would come into class and get inspired, I'd go outside and get inspired—just life," explained Raskoff when asked about the inspiration behind his work.

The retired meteorology instructor has deep roots at Valley College. He is also a former Valley student. An accomplished pilot, he told stories of being the former advisor to a flight club decades ago at Valley College and taking his students flying often in his $18,000 "ultralight" single-engine plane.

Friends and former students who attended the exhibit bantered back and forth with Raskoff about their flying experiences with him.

"I have never been so scared in my life!" joked Museum Curator Bill Carpenter when reminded of his flight with Raskoff over the California coastline years ago.

Carpenter started working at the museum seven years ago when it was located in a bungalow. The museum is now located in the new Library and Academic Resource Center.

"[Our mission] is to preserve the local history of this area and collect funds to keep the Museum open. We're always looking for contributions, whether it's a check or another historical artifact," said Carpenter.

Although the exhibit was technically set to start at 5 p.m., several of the attendees—most of whom were personal friends and acquaintances of Raskoff—arrived considerably sooner and enjoyed the museum in its entirety.

Guests who were not indulging in the generous amount of free concessions or mesmerized by the alluring 2-by-2 amethyst stone, were reveling in all the other wondrous artifacts the museum has to offer.

Antiquated typewriters and cameras, a map of Los Angeles County from 1898, a scale model of Van Nuys City Hall and a glass-display section dedicated to W.P. Whitsett—the man who essentially made Van Nuys into a suburban metropolis—were among the other popular attractions at the museum.

For further information on upcoming exhibits and donation opportunities, visit:www.lavc.edu/museum/.

LADY MONARCHS' SEASON COMES TO AN END

The Lady Monarchs' season ended last Wednesday night after losing to San Bernardino College.

JULIO FLORES
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

The Lady Monarchs' winning season came to an end this past Wednesday after losing 61-55 to the San Bernardino Wolverines in the second round of the Southern California Regional playoffs.

Valley was down by double digits most of the game but fought back to get within 6 points in the second half.

"This is the best team I've ever coached. We overachieved," said coach Monica Hang. "Our ultimate goal was to make the playoffs. And adding a championship, an all-conference team and to get past the first round of the playoffs was great. Our team came a long way."

Earlier this season, the Lady Monarchs won the Western State Conference Championship.

The Wolverines got off to a fast start taking an early 15-4 lead with 14:34 left to play in the first half. The green and gold tried to gather momentum after Ani Avanessian made a 12-foot jump shot, but the Wolverines' offense answered back. The score was 22-12 with 7:15 left to play in the first half.

"We stuck to our game plan and kept our composure." said Norissa Sanders of San Bernardino.

With 3:30 left to play in the first half, San Bernardino went on an 8-2 run going into halftime with a 32-25 lead.

The Wolverines' strong offensive attack continued in the second half of the game. Both San Bernardino's Sanders and Neika Puryear made back-to-back jump shots extending their lead to 47- 29.

The Lady Monarchs gathered rhythm with 13:17 left to play in the game. Valley's Lydia Pope made a 3-pointer to bring the Monarchs within 13. Then Jordan Santiago hit a shot from behind the arc, making the score 47-38 and starting the Monarchs' 8-0 run.

"We had to calm down our play and keep our composure," said Puryear of San Bernardino in her response to Valley's 8-0 run.

Lady Monarch Jackie Sanchez made a 3 for a 52-46 deficit. Sanchez tried a 3 but stepped over the line, sinking a 2-point basket from the corner and making the score 54-48 with 2:50 left in the game.

Valley was unable to make up for opportunities in the last minutes of the game with missed shots, securing a win for San Bernardino.

PHOTO COPYRIGHT NEIL G. PHILLIPS
EASY COME, EASY GO - In a post-season game, the Monarchs battled to within six, before losing to San Bernardino.

THINK IT THROUGH

VINTAGE KOBE MAKES LAKERS SENSIBLE

The Lakers' troubled season has Kobe playing the best basketball of his career.

ROMEO GONZALEZ

Number twenty-four. That's how he's playing, as if he was 24 again. Kobe Bryant, or "Vino" as he's been recently called, is proof that age is just a number, looking and playing better than he did when he was 24 years old.

We all remember when Bryant scored 81 points against Toronto in 2006, but no one could have predicted that he would still be having 40-point games when he's nearly 40 himself.

It has been said before that he is the best in the NBA and the only one who can be compared to the great Michael Jordan, having already played 192 more games than Jordan did in his career. He is the only other player whose competitive drive and will to win pushes him beyond his limits.

"He wants it so bad he's willing to go to the extreme," said Michael Jordan in an interview with Ahmad Rashad. "Guarding point guards at the age of 34, playing 38, 40 minutes, that's ludicrous; he's cursed as much as I am."

During the off-season, there is no off-season for Bryant. He spent last summer in Germany receiving blood treatments, helping him elevate his game literally and figuratively—we all remember what he did to Josh Smith earlier this month. No one could have predicted the Bryant we are seeing this season is the same guy we saw last year in Oklahoma, the 34-year-old man who looked like age was closing in on him.

Bryant has become the team's scorer and facilitator. According to realgm.com, he leads the Lakers in points averaging 27.67 points a game and shooting 65 percent. He is second in steals averaging 1.31 and assists averaging 5.80 per game.

What Bryant has done in the last few Lakers games has amazed his fans, reminding us of vintage Bryant from the early 2000s.

Last Wednesday against New Orleans, he scored 13 of the Lakers' last 16 points and played the entire second half. And who could forget about Friday's game against Toronto, where he made three clutch three-pointers to clinch the team's 32nd victory, putting the Lakers in playoff contingency.

Bryant, who is not even in the conversation when it comes to discussing the MVP of the league, has pushed the Lakers through their dysfunction and chaos, while pushing himself up a hill after all the miles he has put on his body.

It is clear that the late Jerry Buss knew what he was doing when he decided to trade Shaquille O'Neal and keep Bryant back in 2004. After all, he did win two more championships with the Lakers without O'Neal. Bryant does not just play for the Lakers; he is the Lakers.

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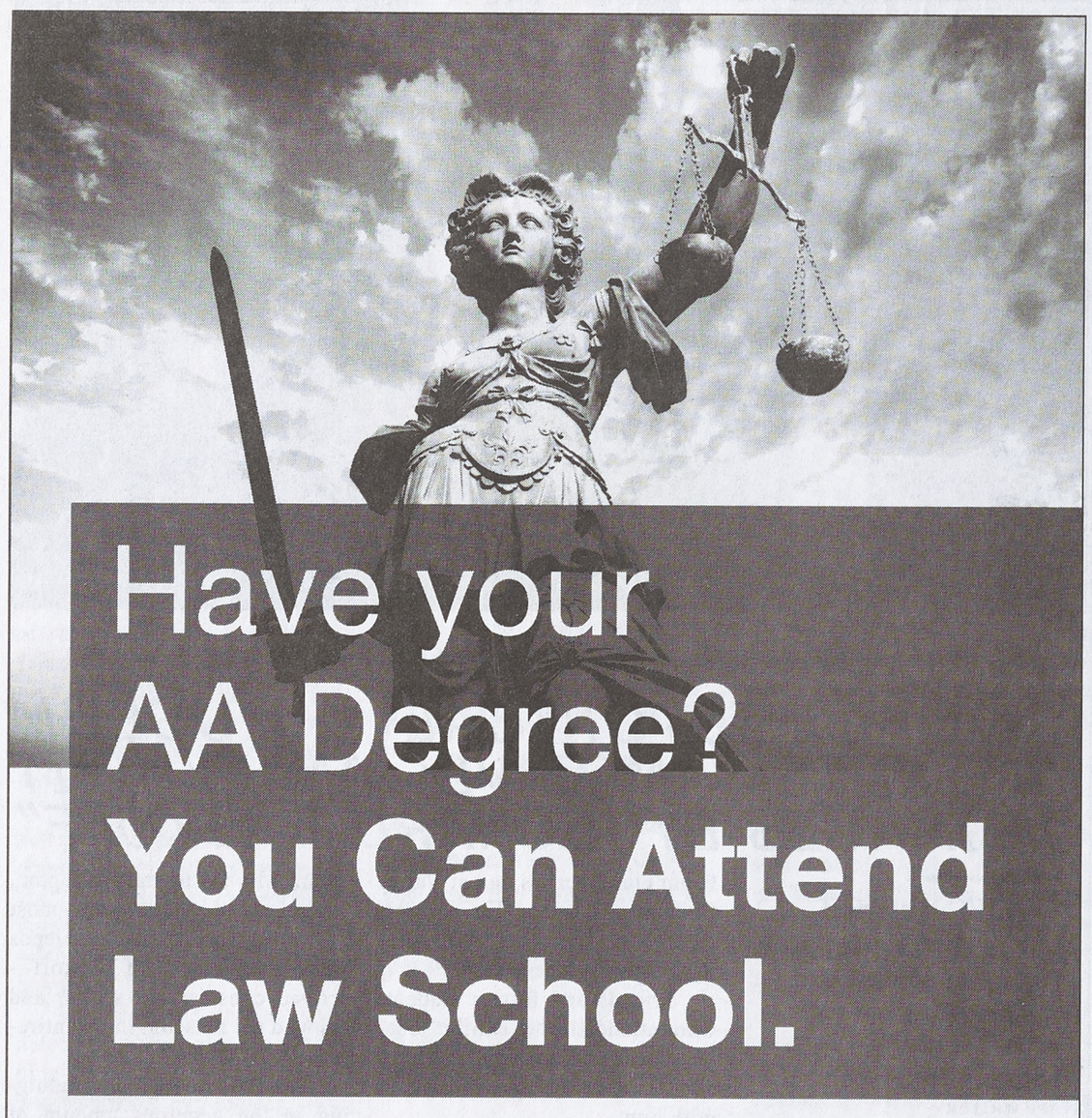

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MONARCH FOOTBALL PLAYERS HEADED TO FOUR YEAR SCHOOLS

Valley College's Amir Saleh and Ekene Mordi received scholarships to four-year universities.

JULIO FLORES
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Valley College football players Amir Saleh and Ekene Mordi have received scholarships to four-year universities for the fall semester. Saleh will be attending South Dakota Tech, and Mordi will be transferring to Texas Prairie View A&M.

"It's been my intent to go to a four-year school and get a degree," said Saleh. "It would be nice to get away and get a new experience and get a degree."

Saleh, a San Fernando Valley native, started playing football at Granada Hills High School and then transferred to Valley where he played offensive, linebacker and defensive end.

"It's a great feeling of accomplishment that we have helped a lot of players to become successful. They've earned it," said Valley coach Larry Kerr. "Our whole goal is to get our players to a four-year school, but getting a scholarship is a big bonus."

Both players were first contacted by the schools in mid-November and signed their letters of intent last month.

"It really hit me when I got out there. This is really going to happen," said Mordi. "I really enjoyed the campus. Everyone seemed nice."

According to Mordi, his parents were not sure if he would get a scholarship but encouraged him to continue playing football. Mordi is also a product of Granada Hills High School and played defensive end for Valley.

"I wasn't sure I would get a scholarship, but when it did happen I was really happy and so was my family," said Mordi.

According to Kerr, it has gotten more difficult for student-athletes to receive scholarships; not only with the usual requirements of math, English and science courses, but now the minimum GPA requirement has increased from a 2.0 to a 2.5.

Kerr assists his student-athletes to receive help on their academic courses.

"They have to be willing to go ask for help," said Kerr. "Some may feel it's a sign of weakness to ask for help. But, it's directly the opposite."

"Scouts regularly come to games and to practices to see players," said Kerr. "We create a highlight reel for every player so schools and scouts can see them."

According to Kerr, some players may want to play for the major Division One schools but when schools come calling, a player has to think realistically and may have to go to a smaller school.

"Mordi and Saleh have worked to get their scholarship on the field and in the class, so I'm happy to see them succeed," said Kerr.

ERIKA SUPLECOVA| VALLEY STAR
FOUR YEARS- On the left is Amir Saleh who will be going to South Dakota Tech this upcoming fall semester. On the right is Ekene Mordi who will be transferring to Texas Prairie View A&M this upcoming fall semester.